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ABSTRACT

A high intensity language training (HILT) summer program in English as a second language and Spanish as a second language offered to second through eighth grade students in the North Monterey County Unified School District (California) during the summers of 1982 and 1983 is described. The program funding, design, admission, development, and scheduling process is outlined. The schedule included an hour each day for each of these elements: vocabulary, culture, literature, and art. Practical suggestions for extending the limits of a pull-out program and activities that can be easily incorporated into a bilingual classroom are included. HILT student responses in followup interviews conducted 7 months after the 1983 summer program are also presented. A discussion of how a positive second language learning experience at the elementary level may provide intrinsic motivation to learn a second language, as well as nurture cross-cultural understanding between English- and Spanish-speaking students, is based on those student reactions. (MSE)

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Summer HILT Experience: ESL and SSL for Elementary School

by

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North Monterey County Unified School District

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Abstract

This paper describes the High Intensity Language Training (HILT) summer program in English as a Second Language (ESL) and Spanish as a Second Language (SSL) offered to second through eighth graders in North Monterey County Unified School District during the summers of 1982 and 1983. It includes practical ideas for extending the limits of a pull-out program and activities that can be easily incorporated into a bilingual classroom. Also included is a description of HILT student responses to follow-up interviews conducted seven months after the 1983 summer program. Based on the student responses, implications are suggested for how a positive second language learning experience at the elementary level may provide intrinsic motivations to learn a second language as well as nurture cross cultural understanding between English and Spanish speaking students .

During the summers of 1982 and 1983 North Monterey County Unified school District offered a High Intensity Language Training (HILT) summer program in English as a Second Language (ESL) and Spanish as a Second Language (SSL) to elementary school children in the district. This paper reviews how HILT was implemented and modified over the two summers, and outlines the model developed by the authors for an intensive language program at the elementary level that incorporates research on second language acquisition (Krashen, 1981) and approaches to second language teaching developed by Asher (1969) and Terrel (1977).

North Monterey County USD received funding for HILT as part of a two year Title VII Desegregation Support grant. The grant was for $151,000.00, of which $15,000.00 each year was designated to fund the HILT summer program.

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This amount covered the cost of one coordinator, four teachers, four instructional aides, any other support staff and all instructional materials. The school district covered the cost of bus transportation and student lunches.

Guidelines for implementing the intensive language summer school were written into the Title VII grant. Essentially, the grant proposal used the district's ESL continuum from the IDEA Kit (Ballard and Tighe) to evaluate student progress during the program. In 1982, the first summer HILT was offered, each teacher was responsible for setting up the curriculum for her individual class. The goal for all HILT classes was for students to master sixteen objectives on the pupil profile card from the IDEA kit. The context for ESL and SSL students to interact occurred during drama activities conducted bilingually twice a week. Instruction in the second language was provided four hours a day for four weeks.

At the end of the 1982 summer program, the teaching staff made several recommendations to modify and improve the HILT program for 1983. These suggestions were incorporated into the guidelines for the program, and represent the basis for the positive outcomes of HILT in 1983. The recommendations included criteria for admitting students into the program, limiting class size, and providing more opportunities for interaction between ESL and SSL students.

A criteria for admitting students was established rather than using the first come, first served policy of 1982. The teaching staff recommended that only students on grade level in their primary language be admitted to HILT. This was particularly appropriate for the Spanish speakers below grade level since they would benefit more from academic instruction in their primary language during migrant summer school than from a second language program such as HILT. The staff also recommended that the class size be limited to fifteen students as the maximum number one teacher could adequately accomodate

in an intensive language setting.

The third recommendation was that more opportunities for interaction between the ESL and SSL students needed to be explored. This suggestion led the authors to realize that a structure of some kind needed to be provided to insure a uniform experience for the HILT students. Instead of focusing on the skill objectives of the grammatically sequenced profile card, the focus for the 1983 program was to establish an intensely positive second language learning environment in which students would be actively engaged in meaningful language experiences. Taking into account the vocabulary and grammatical stuctures taught in the IDEA program, four topics were chosen to fill twenty days of instruction, one topic per week. The topics were chosen for their obvious potential as a basis for meaningful interaction and interest: Me, Food, Seasons and Community.

Once the topics for the four weeks had been decided upon, the next step was to design a daily structure that would allow for optimal input (according to Krashen's criteria) as well as emphasize the various functions of language. This was accomplished by structuring the daily schedule into four distinct language activities, as is illustrated in figure 1.

(insert figure 1 here)

The day was conveniently divided into four one hour blocks. The first hour was spent on vocabulary development for the particular topic of the week using Total Physical Response (TPR) (Asher, 1969) whenever possible. At this time students were actively, physically involved in listening in the target language.

During the second hour of the day teachers continued to focus on the vocabulary from the first hour while placing it into a larger situational context. This was referred to as the "Culture Hour". The goal during the

	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4
Topics	ME	FOOD	SEASONS	COMMUNITY
8:30 - 9:20	Vocabulary of the day introduced and reviewed at this time; TPR activities stressed.			
9:20 - 9:30	Recess			
9:30 - 10:30	Culture hour focusing on situational context for language: communication lines, interviews, cooking, songs, slide shows, play preparation, games.			
10:30 - 11:30	Literature hour: language experience approach used as students illustrated and copied songs, poems, and proverbs learned; final product was a book for each student.			
11:30 - 12:00	Lunch			
12:00 - 1:00	Art hour. ESL and SSL students were combined to work one week in English room, then one week in Spanish room.			
ESL room:	Totem poles	Basketweaving	Kite making	(Play
SSL room:	Ojos de Dios	Piñatas	Bark Paintings	rehersals)

Figure 1

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second hour was to maintain 100% comprehensible input while extending the context in which the language is used. During this hour teachers used drama activities, songs, slide shows and films when appropriate to the topic of the week. For instance, on breakfast day during the Food week, students prepared and ate breakfast together. Students who were still in the pre-production stage followed the directions of students in the speech emergence state of their second language development.

The third hour of the day was the literature hour. Still working with the vocabulary of the day, the goal was to take it from its situational context and place it into a literary one. Teachers used children's literature in the target language to maintain a literary focus even when it was not always specific to the vocabulary of the day. During this time students worked on making their own books. Book making was an ongoing project where students recorded and illustrated their experiences with the target language, such as recipes they had used, songs, poems and sayings they had learned, as well as other activities of the week. Through this process of recording their oral language experiences, students created their own language texts to take with them at the end of the four weeek program.

The last hour of the day was designated the art hour. This was the time and context established to promote interaction between the native English speakers and native Spanish speakers. The students were divided between the ESL room and SSL room so that each classroom had native speakers of both languages working together on the same art project. Each art project lasted one week, so that one week students would be working in the target language and the next week they would be working in their native language.

The goals during the art hour were to establish a context for real communication between the native English speakers and native Spanish speakers. While the teachers did not see the level of negotiation between the ESL

students and SSL students they had hoped for, they did see a shift during the art activities from the target language being teacher controlled to the target language being student controlled.

Perhaps the most positive aspect of the art hour was the equal status it gave to the Spanish language. The ESL students commented during the follow-up interviews that they appreciated the opportunity to use both languages. The art hour seemed to foster a feeling of mutual respect and understanding among the students.

The HILT teachers responded enthusiastically to the summer experience and perceived the daily structure established as the key to the program's success. In order to find out how students perceived their own experience learning the second language, follow-up interviews were conducted seven months after the program ended.

Student responses. The questionnaire used to interview the students asked them the motivations for taking ESL or SSL, and what they remembered about each of the four hours of the day. In order to find out whether or not the HILT experience had any effect on how the English speakers perceived the Spanish speakers, a hypothetical situation involving biased opinions of Spanish was included to which the students were asked to respond.

For the ESL students chosen to participate in HILT, their motivations for taking the summer class were similar. All of them were beginning English learners, and were glad to have the opportunity to continue studying English during the summer. When asked how the summer ESL class differed from the regular school year ESL program, they all pointed out how they had done so many different activities in HILT compared to the regular pull-out ESL class. They mentioned preparing food and writing recipes, making collages --which incidentally were teacher directed lessons— and writing their books. They all said they still had their books, and that they enjoyed looking at them as a way of remembering all the activities they had done

during the summer. The ESL students also mentioned how they enjoyed helping and being helped by the English speakers during the Art hour. None of the ESL students said they remembered a least favorite activity.

This was almost the case for the SSL students, although one student did mention his least favorite activity in the morning. "My least favorite thing was having to go outside for recess." The SSL students responded very enthusiastically to their HILT experience. As one student put it, "I didn't expect taking Spanish to be so much fun."

When asked why they decided to take HILT, every one of them responded they wanted to learn Spanish to get a better job. Jason, a sixth grader, remarked, "A lot of jobs require you to be bilingual." Several students also said it would help them communicate better with other people.

The student books were also an important memento of the summer program for the students. Most said they look at their books once a week. They were able to retell the plot of the play they had performed; some remembered their lines word for word. They recalled singing songs, learning poems and "refranes" (proverbs), talking in communication lines and using interaction grids. No particular activity was mentioned as more enjoyable than the others, although the importance of the book <u>after</u> the program ended suggests that the students can recall their language experiences as frequently as they would like by looking at their student made books.

At the end of the questionnaire, the SSL students were asked to respond to the following hypothetical situation:

> One day you overhear some students saying that it's stupid that some people speak Spanish. What would you think about that?

This was one of the student responses:

> I'd tell them that it's not that stupid. They probably think it's stupid because they can't do it. If they could, then they'd think it's neat to be able to speak Spanish.

This comment reflects the perspective expressed by the SSL students. The idea of a foreign language was not threatening to them; in fact, the experience of being in a Spanish environment for four hours daily was very exciting and understandable for them. All of the SSL students said they wished they could continue Spanish during the school year, and they hoped they could take an advanced Spanish class the following summer. The response by parents in the school district has been equally favorable towards the HILT summer program. Despite the fact that the two year Title VII grant ended, the school district is considering offering HILT as part of the state funded summer school program in 1984. These are all positive steps in promoting second language learning as well as bridging the gap between cultural and linguistic differences in North Monterey County Unified School District.

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